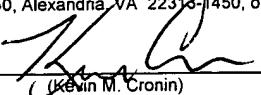


I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

Dated: October 27, 2004      Signature: 

(Kevin M. Cronin)

Docket No.: 101896-0178  
(PATENT)

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of:  
Tushar Patel et al.

Application No.: 10/609,123

Confirmation No.: 6697

Filed: June 27, 2003

Art Unit: 3732

For: TISSUE RETRCTOR AND DRILL GUIDE

Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

### STATUS INQUIRY

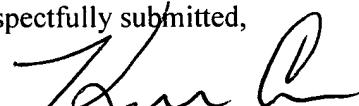
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

It is respectfully requested that the attorney named below be advised of the status of the above-identified application. Please advise us of when we might expect to receive an Office Action from the Patent and Trademark Office.

Dated: October 27, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By   
Kevin M. Cronin

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